**Penny Wars for Sarah**

**By Sammy Harris**

**Writing Work Shop A1**

**Miss Davis**

When I first heard about Sarah I couldn’t believe that someone so adorable had Leukemia. The little girl’s illness sounded like a good cause for the project, but I was a little afraid that no one would donate money. Kristin, a class mate; showed the rest of the class a picture of Sarah. She has a beautiful smiled, black shiny hair and looks so happy in the pictures with her dancing clothes on. When I first saw her I knew that this is the project we should do for Mr. Lopez, the author of The Soloist. Our class started a goal is to raise 2,000 dollars. I was skeptical if we could get that much, but I threw those thoughts away when I started to work on Penny Wars, which is our fund raiser for Sarah. Each class has their own jars to put the money in: senior, juniors, sophomores, freshmen and teachers. We also have jars in public places, Fazoli’s, Salon Utopia, Coffee Times, and a couple of dance studios.

I have fought even the rain for the project. It was raining really hard on the first day, but that didn’t stop me to fulfill my duty. I was given the task to bring posters for the thermometers showing how much money each grade level has raised. So using my brain, I grabbed a huge black trash bag from the top of the fridge of my home. To my luck it was big enough to cover the posters. I out smarted the rain and even though I got soaked to the bone, the posters stayed nice and dry and ready for us to get the word out about Penny Wars.

I drew the thermometers and updated them when they needed to be updated. I sat in the cafeteria every morning yelling for donations, yes I yelled for them. I would say “Help save a little girl!” or “Help save Sarah! She has Leukemia!” Which caused my throat to hurt, but I didn’t care and I still don’t. This was all for Sarah. Along with yelling for donations I counted them as well. I took time out of my chaotic schedule. Between doing chores and going to work at Wal-mart, I stayed after school on a day off; counting money from the senior jar. It took forever, but it was fun.

People really surprised me. I had many doubts when our class first started this project. Mostly that the kids in our school are not mature enough to handle such a thing. I was terrified that they would rip down our posters as a joke or just to be mean, but that didn’t happened which is a good thing.

The first day of donations was the most exciting for me. I stood up in the door way with the jars and a small table. Everyone else in the class was not there or was too busy to help me so I stood alone. People at first didn’t notice me. I thought no one will ever donate, however one person had a whole purse full of change and donated it to the senior jar. It was some kind of chain reaction because the other students suddenly started to donate into the different jars. Even more people walked over and dropped all their change in each day. I could tell by the look on their faces they did something good not just for Sarah, but for themselves as well. I was overwhelmed how much people gave that I was awe struck.

The following days were even better. I remember on the day we decided to start the penny wars I went around all my classes and made big announcements. News spread about the penny war like wild fire and all classes are donating. Even during class people would walk up to me and dump loads of change in my hands telling they wanted to donate. Even teachers brought bags in and they always looked for me rather than for Miss Davis. The feeling made me feel more involved in the project.

Not only had the change surprised me it was also the amount of questions we received about Sarah. *Was she okay? Where is she now? How can we help more to save this little girl?* I didn’t think people cared for a small child with Leukemia. Before I started this project; I always thought people are selfish beings, but I know now that not all people are like that.

I didn’t know much about Sarah: only the information Kristin provided to us. Recently she told our class that Sarah has lost all her hair during her therapy. When I heard that I had to fight back pain in my stomach. I wanted to cry right there in class when I heard that news. When I told people about Sarah’s condition then gave more money! Perhaps they felt sorry for her or had a similar experience with a love one.

I’ve noticed before when we started this project our class didn’t really know each other really well. Yeah we talk and held conversations but that was about it. In a way Sarah has brought us together and we worked very well. One day I decided to sit down with Kait and Julia while they did the donations. We talk mostly of prom and what dresses are the best and other things. Despite that I had no interest in prom I felt I was slowly becoming their friends even if it was just for the Penny wars. None of us has fought with each other; maybe we are too busy thinking about Sarah and the project.

This project has changed my life for the better. When I see other people trying to get donations I will remember Sarah and all that we as a class has done for her and how she left a impact not just on my life, but on my heart as well. I will try to be more selfless and give when I can give. I don’t know that our class will reach our goal, however every little bit counts. I won’t give up until the very end to get donations for Sarah.